

APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 3, 2019.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

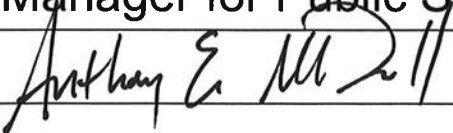
PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico
Program Title: Caregiver Kits
Program Category: Customer Service

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Anthony McDowell
Title: Deputy County Manager for Public Safety
Signature: 

Program Overview

Caregiver Kits at Henrico County Public Library (HCPL) enable those experiencing memory loss or dementia-related illness to connect easily with family members, friends, and caregivers by revisiting familiar themes from their lives. The kits contain books with vibrant photographs, DVDs of classic movies or television shows, popular music CDs, and discussion prompts, all chosen with the goal of encouraging memory and conversation. Each kit has a theme with broad appeal such as local history, cooking, or pets. Anyone with a library card can check out a kit to share with an older adult who may be suffering from a memory deficiency. Adults with memory disorders often have difficulty communicating verbally, but sensory stimulation reminiscent of their past, such as the images and music in Caregiver Kits, can stimulate deep memory and help them find the words they need to connect with their loved ones.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

Henrico County is experiencing the effects of the age wave as the Baby Boomer generation enters retirement and advanced age. The County has a higher percentage of older adult residents than the national average, and one of the highest percentages in the metropolitan Richmond region, according to census data. As a result, Henrico County Public Library serves large numbers of older adults, families caring for Seniors in their homes, and staff of residential Senior care facilities. All of these patrons are looking to improve quality of life for older adults. The Mobile Library Service at HCPL regularly visits Senior communities and works extensively with older adults and their caregivers. One concern regularly shared with Mobile Library Services staff is that older adults with memory loss or dementia-related illnesses no longer engage in conversations or daily activities as regularly or with the same enjoyment as they had in the past. Memory loss due to dementia, Alzheimer's, or stroke can make it difficult for people living with the conditions to find the words they wish to say. Sometimes family members or staff in Senior living

facilities felt unsure of or overwhelmed about how to start a conversation. These older adults were becoming increasingly isolated socially. However, when presented with images or music from their younger lives, those with memory loss can find words more easily, because these are deep memories that can survive even after the onset of dementia or an event like a stroke. With the population as a whole aging rapidly, and especially in Henrico County, there was a clear need to provide materials that could help older adults connect with friends and family in more meaningful ways.

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

Caregiver Kits represent an innovation in Library service to older adults and those who care for them, in that they repurpose library assets in a new way to meet an emerging community need. The population of older adults is increasing across the nation as the Baby Boomer generation enters retirement. Along with increasing numbers of older adults, there is a corresponding increase in the prevalence of memory disorders such as dementia, Alzheimer's, and cognitive impairment due to stroke. The Mobile Library Services Supervisor Gina Fuller responded to community requests for help sparking conversation between older adults with memory loss and their caregivers by creating Caregiver Kits. Staff worked across departments and utilized existing Library resources and staff expertise to create the kits. While HCPL purchased new items and backpacks to create the kits, library systems across the state could scale this service to the size of their budgets by using materials they already own. Library systems with fewer staff could also develop Caregiver Kits, because many of the duties involved in creating the kits are routine. The success of the kits is evident in their use, attention from local media and memory care professionals, and positive feedback from the community. Caregiver Kits are a new and effective way of achieving a longstanding mission for libraries everywhere: connecting people with information they need.

How Program Was Carried Out

The mission of Henrico County Public Library is to promote reading and lifelong learning, connect people with the information they need, and enrich community life. Caregiver Kits were designed with the objective to achieve this mission and serve older adults with memory disorders, their loved ones, and caregivers – to use information to provide an avenue for people to connect with each other, learn from one another, and improve their quality of life. Inspired by conversations with older adults and their caregivers, the Mobile Library Services Supervisor set out to create an easy-to-use, grab-and-go kit that any Library cardholder could access and engage with immediately to start a conversation with a friend experiencing memory loss. She wanted to curate kits with high-interest themes and broad appeal to persons born in the 1930s and later. The kits would need to feature items stimulating to the senses such as photographs, videos, and music, to trigger deep memory while minimizing the need to read.

The Mobile Library Services Supervisor knew she would need resources and staff to create these kits, and so began by bringing the idea to the Library Director for approval. After the project was approved in December 2017, members of the Library's Adult Services Committee brainstormed to develop the kit themes. Each committee member was assigned to design a kit around one theme. Themes for the kits include the 1940s & 50s, 1960s & 70s, Automobiles, Richmond History, Holidays, Farm Life, Food and Cooking, and Pets. Committee members created lists of materials for the kits, including photography-rich books, CDs, and DVDs. In order for users of the kits to be able to dive into conversations more easily, staff created corresponding discussion questions and prompts for each theme.

The Mobile Library Services Supervisor worked to coordinate with the Library's Collection Management department and the Circulation Coordinator to create receiving, packaging, and circulation processes, and worked across departments to create, package, and circulate the kits. Criteria was developed for the kits, including: a minimum number of three items; all items selected

must be in print so that they could be replaced easily if lost or damaged; items would need to be small enough to fit into a backpack; and each kit could not be so heavy as to make the backpacks difficult to carry.

Staff worked to design and purchase materials for the kits between December 2017 and March 2018. The kits were then processed and cataloged, and went into circulation in June 2018. The Kits are contained and circulated in mesh backpacks, so the contents are visible to prospective borrowers browsing the shelves, and so that staff can easily see whether all items are present in the kit when it is returned. Caregiver Kits are available at each of the County's five Area Libraries, in each Magisterial District, but patrons can reserve a kit to pick up at any HCPL location, including the four smaller branch libraries across the County. The kits check out for two weeks at a time and can be renewed. Each Area Library determined a location to showcase and store the kits, and signage varies by Library.

Promotion for the kits consisted of a press release picked up by local paper the Henrico Citizen, printed promotion in the Library's widely-distributed Program Guide, flyers, and features on the Library's website and social media. The Mobile Library Service promotes the kits regularly at their visits to Senior care facilities. As of April 2019, the kits have circulated over 70 times. Feedback for the kits has been overwhelmingly positive.

Financing and Staffing

Caregiver Kits expand Library services to meet emerging community needs by using existing Library resources: staff expertise, and collections. Caregiver Kits essentially package materials that the Library already owns, or can purchase within existing collections budgets, in such a way that they are made useful to the growing population of older adults and those who care for them. The kits also make valuable materials and experiences available to HCPL cardholders at no cost

to them, their families, or those under their care, and can be created at little cost to a Library system.

The cost to develop Caregiver Kits included materials and staff time. Work to develop the kits was spread out across departments and involved work routine to staff duties: public services, committee work, collection development, acquisitions, circulation policy, and public relations. Eight themed kits were developed, with three kits made for each theme, for a total of 24 kits. HCPL purchased backpacks as well as new items for each of the kits, many of which were already part of the Library’s collection; a library system with limited collection development resources and staff could assign smaller numbers of staff to group already-owned materials into kits and provide discussion questions in order to replicate the service.

- Books, CDs, and DVDs

# Copies	Kit Name	Cost
3	1940s/50s AV	\$63.84
	1940s/50s Books	\$104.22
3	1960s/70s AV	\$217.86
	1960s/70s Book	\$80.79
2	Auto AV	\$130.86
	Auto Books	\$97.16
1	Farm AV	\$101.71
	Farm Books	\$69.39
3	Food AV	\$152.10
	Food Books	\$97.44
2	Holidays AV	\$129.18

	Holidays Books	\$111.70
3	Pets AV	\$365.40
	Pets Books	\$82.59
3	RVA AV	\$225.00
	RVA Books	\$205.02

- Backpacks: 24 at \$20/each: \$480.00
- **Grand Total: \$2714.26**

Program Results

Caregiver Kits were made available to the public in June 2018 with the goal of providing an avenue for people with dementia and other memory disorders to connect with their caregivers and loved ones. As of April 2019, Caregiver Kits have circulated over 70 times across Henrico County. The most popular kits by circulation count are Richmond (local) History, Food & Cooking, and 1940s & 50s.

Local Science reporters from the local NPR/PBS station, WCVB The Community Idea Stations, encountered the press release and requested promotional materials regarding the Kits to distribute at a symposium on aging for memory care professionals held in November 2018. Mobile Library Services was invited to host a table at and attend the symposium.

In early April 2019, the Virginia Public Library Director's Association awarded Caregiver Kits an Outstanding Service Innovation award, and is looking into creating a statewide program for Caregiver Kits.

A young woman who used a kit to converse with her great-grandmother agreed to be interviewed for a video produced by the County's Department of Public Relations and Media

Services, as she had such a positive experience using the kit. She had selected the Richmond History-themed kit, and was able to connect with her great-grandmother through the materials and discussion prompts. She said of her experience: “What the kit opened up as far as opportunity goes, is a realization, an understanding that we are all people, and we are all here...to connect with one another. Some way, somehow, everybody just wants connection.”

In the video, the young woman goes on to say, “My great-grandmother, she was able to share her youth with me through those books and through those very natural conversations that we had. So not only were we learning together, about things that she may not have known existed inside the Richmond area, but we were able to share experiences from what I’m currently going through, and what she was able to witness in her youth.”

This young woman, and others who have used the kits and shared feedback, have illustrated that the objective underpinning Caregiver Kits has been achieved. The kits are a valuable service to the growing population of older adults and those with memory disorders in Henrico County, and are able to stimulate deep memory and conversation between these adults and those who care for them.

Brief Summary

Caregiver Kits are a new service from Henrico County Public Library designed to serve older adults with memory disorders, their loved ones, and caregivers. The kits use information to provide an avenue for people to connect with each other and improve quality of life. Inspired by conversations with older adults and their caregivers, Library staff set out to create an easy-to-use, grab-and-go kit that any Library cardholder could access to start a conversation with a friend experiencing memory loss. Staff curated kits with high-interest themes and broad appeal to persons born in the 1930s and later. The kits would feature items stimulating to the senses such as photographs, videos, and music, to trigger deep memory while minimizing the need to read.

While HCPL purchased new items and backpacks to create the kits, library systems across the state could scale this service to the size of their budgets by using materials they already own. Library systems with fewer staff could also develop Caregiver Kits, because many of the duties involved in creating the kits are routine.

Caregiver Kits became available in June 2018. As of April 2019, Caregiver Kits have circulated over 70 times. The success of the kits is evident in their use, attention from local media and memory care professionals, an award from the Virginia Public Library Directors Association, and positive feedback from the community.

The population of older adults is increasing across the nation as the Baby Boomer generation enters retirement, and there is a corresponding increase in the prevalence of memory disorders. Henrico County Public Library staff developed Caregiver Kits in response to community requests for help sparking conversation between older adults with memory loss and their caregivers. Caregiver Kits represent an innovation in Library service to older adults and those who care for them, in that they repurpose library assets in a new way to meet an emerging community need.